

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 MMS-03 SS-20 ABF-01 A-01 PER-05

RSC-01 DRC-01 /053 W

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R 021625Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5404

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 9435

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN, CG, PINR

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REDUCTION IN DAO KINSHASA

REF: (A) KINSHASA A-111, MAY 17, 1972

(B) KINSHASA 8902, OCT 15, 1973

(C) STATE 213481, OCT 30, 1973

1. I DO NOT TAKE THE POSITION THAT THE NUMBER OF AMERICANS PRESENTLY ASSIGNED IN ZAIRE IS NECESSARILY THE PERSONNEL STRENGTH REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT OUR MISSION HERE. IN LINE WITH THIS, I DO NOT OBJECT TO ANY REDUCTIONS DIA AND DAO CONSIDER FEASIBLE WHICH WOULD STILL ENABLE DAO TO ACHIEVE ITS ASSIGNED TASKS. ON THE OTHER HAND, POSITIONS CRITICAL TO THE OPERATIONS OF THE MISSION SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE FILLED. SINCE THE RECOMMENDATION IN A-111 OF MAY 17, 1972 WAS DRAFTED, TWO FUNDAMENTAL DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OCCURRED WHICH MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT:

(A) THE ZAMISH C-123 AIRCRAFT AND ITS CREW (SIX MILITARY PERSONNEL) HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN THEREBY REDUCING ENTIRE MISSION TO DEPENDENCE ON DAO U-21 AIRCRAFT. (I AM CERTAIN DEPT APPRECIATES ESSENTIALITY OF CONTINUOUS AVAILABILITY THIS REMAINING AIRCRAFT GIVEN VASTNESS OF ZAIRE, UNRELIABILITY OF COMMERCIAL AIR TRANSPORT AND IMPOSSIBILITY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT);

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KB) THE NUMBER OF DAO PERSONNEL HAS BEEN REDUCED FROM TEN TO EIGHT.

2. AGAINST ABOVE BACKGROUND, IF DIA AND DEPT WISH TO MAKE FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN DAO STRENGTH, THIS IS ACCEPTABLE TO ME PROVIDED THAT WE CONTINUE TO HAVE THREE PILOTS AND ONE MECHANIC QUALIFIED FOR THE U-21. IN KINSHASA 8902 I SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY OF REPLACING PRESENT DATT IN JUNE 1974 WITH A DATT WHO QUALIFIED PILOT U-21. THIS WOULD PERMIT REFTEL'S PLAN OF TRANSFER BY ATTRITION OF ASST. ARMA PILOT. HOWEVER, FUTURE REPLACEMENTS FOR AIR ATTACHE AND ASST ARMA WOULD, AS AT PRESENT, HAVE TO BE U-21 PILOTS.

3. I RECOGNIZE THAT EMBASSY HAS ALREADY CONCURRED IN ASSIGNMENT OF COLONEL ROBERT MARSHALL GROW AS REPLACEMENT D FBR DATT AND HE PRESUMABLY HAS BEGUN TRAINING FOR ZAIRE. HOWEVER, BASED ON MY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE WITH THIS KIND OF TRAINING, I DOUBT IF SELECTION OF A PILOT AT THIS POINT IN TIME WITH SOME REDUCTION IN TRAINING WILL SUBSTANTIVELY AFFECT DAO OPERATIONS HERE. I WOULD, OF COURSE, WELCOME ANY ALTERNATIVE WHICH WOULD SOLVE PROBLEM OUTLINED IN KINSHASA 8902.
VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: martinjw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973KINSHA09435
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731157/aaaabpta.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 73 KINSHASA A-111, MAY 17, 1972, 73 KINSHASA 8902, OCT 15, 173
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <19 FEB 2002 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED REDUCTION IN DAO KINSHASA
TAGS: OGEN, PINR, CG
To: SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005